

4455.00 32
3

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

ST. THOMAS'S, JANUARY I, 1773,

FOR THE

B E N E F I T

OF THE

CHARITY-SCHOOL,

IN

GRAVEL-LANE, SOUTHWARK,

By THOMAS TOLLER.

PUBLISHED AT THE

REQUEST OF THE MANAGERS.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY J. MARCH;

AND SOLD BY J. BUCKLAND, PATERNOSTER-ROW; E. AND C. DILLY, IN THE POULTRY; AND W. HARRIS, IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

M.DCC.LXXIII.

И О М Я



1001

A S E R M O N.

II. C O R. VI. 2.

BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED
TIME; BEHOLD, NOW IS THE
DAY OF SALVATION.

THERE was never a more faithful, or a more zealous servant of Jesus Christ than the apostle Paul. He went through immense fatigue and labour, and exposed himself to numerous and mighty dangers, to advance the interest of the everlasting gospel. So ardent was his zeal in this service, that some had represented it as exceeding the bounds of reason, and as the effect of a disordered mind. But he acted upon the best principles, and was animated by the most rational motives. He had his eye fixed upon the recompence of the reward,

and knew that his labours and sufferings, in spreading the knowledge and triumphs of divine truth, would be infinitely repaid with the blessings of eternity. — He had a tender, and generous affection to the souls of men; and earnestly wished to prevent their ruin, and conduct them to happiness. — He had a strong and grateful resentment of the love of God in Christ to a guilty world. — And was deeply impressed with the obligations he was under, as intrusted with the ministry of reconciliation, to exert his utmost, though at the expence of the most valuable enjoyments of life, for the salvation of sinners. — We know, says he, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. — Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. — The love of Christ constraineth us — And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. And as the apostle exhorts men to be reconciled to God; to accept the overtures of his mercy; so he exhorts them to it without delay. — Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

The apostolic character hath long ceased. None have been intrusted, since the first age of the gospel, with the ministry of reconciliation in so eminent a sense as the apostles were. None can now assume, without great presumption and arrogance, in the sense applicable to them, (who received their commission immediately from our Lord himself, and were invested with miraculous powers in attestation of it) the dignified and illustrious title of ambassadors for Christ. But the great Head of the church hath given pastors and teachers to support its interests in every age. These are of characters which will continue to the end of the world. And these, if they have any just idea of the worth of souls;—if they have any true apprehension of the vast hazard sinners run, every moment, of being lost for ever;—if they feel the sweet, yet powerful constraints of divine love;—or if they consider the important design of a gospel ministry; and the strict account they must give hereafter, they cannot but attempt, by the warmest exhortations, and most earnest entreaties, to persuade men to secure, and secure without delay, their eternal salvation.—When nothing is so little attended to as the great objects of faith;—when the generality of mankind live and act, day after day, and year after year, as if in this life only there was hope; some in the anxious pursuit of sordid gain; others

others in running the barren round of dissipation and folly; does it not behove the ministers of religion to cry aloud and spare not, as the prophet speaks, to lift up their voice, like a trumpet, to shew sinners their transgressions, and to urge them to forsake the path of sin and death, and enter into the way of righteousness and life? And, as one year is hastening away after another, and the present state of existence is so short and uncertain, should they not press them to an immediate attention to the grand purpose of their beings? — Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

In the FIRST place, through the infinite compassion of God to the apostate race of men, there is an accepted time, and there is a day of salvation. And,

In the SECOND place, now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation.

In the FIRST place, there is an accepted time, and a day of salvation.

We are sinners, and deserve to perish; but we are not lost beyond recovery. We are not under an irreversible sentence of condemnation. We are allowed,

lowed, upon a humble confession of our guilt, to appeal, from the tribunal of justice, to the seat of mercy. He whom we have offended is ready to forgive. He will bestow salvation upon all who sincerely desire, and earnestly seek it. He hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. He will forgive the iniquity of the penitent, and will remember their sins no more. He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. Such assurances as these he gave by the mouth of his prophets, and hath abundantly confirmed them by the gospel of his Son. The doctrine of forgiveness is there revealed with the fullest and brightest evidence. The design of the incarnation, life, labours, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension of the Son of God, and of all his subsequent mediatorial acts, was to save sinners, and to save even the very chief.—A consciousness of having been guilty of the most aggravated crimes is no reason for despair. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. By Him, all that believe are justified from all things. This is the generous and extensive invitation of the benevolent Saviour,—come unto Me ALL ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And the worst of sinners have had rich experience of his unbounded love.—Our apostle, after enumerating some of the vilest offenders,

offenders, said to those whom he addressed, and such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. The ransomed of the Lord, who appear on the mount of Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads, are, indeed, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. But then this holy and glorious church is composed of individuals who were impure and sinful; and some of whom were among the most horribly criminal, and most dreadfully depraved. — Many who were on the very brink of misery, and seemed, above all others, vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, are now triumphing, and will for ever triumph, in the wonders of God's mercy. And is his hand shortened, that it cannot save; or his ear heavy, that it cannot hear? His power and compassion, like his Being, are unchangeable.

The salvation revealed and promised in the gospel, is not a bare exemption from punishment, though

though this alone would render it of unspeakable value, to such as seriously consider, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, when his wrath is kindled but a little. It also includes a restoration to God's favour, and likeness; a re-admission into his family; and a final advancement to complete and never-ending happiness. And how amazing the grace and benignity of the great Lord of all, who is not only ready to pardon a race of guilty rebels, but to embrace them as his children, and to crown them with unfading glory! —When we reflect on the repeated and provoking insults we have offered to the laws and government of God, have we not cause to wonder that there is for us an accepted time; that there is for us a day of salvation! —But this accepted time, and this day of salvation will not always continue. It was observed,

In the SECOND place, that *now* is the accepted time; that *now* is the day of salvation.

LIFE is the time for obtaining the divine acceptance, and for securing our eternal salvation.— While we are inhabitants of this world, we are within the reach of mercy. God is now calling upon sinners, by his word, by his providences, by his ministers, by the voice of conscience, and by

the influences of his Spirit, to comply with the invitations of his grace. He condescends even to beseech and entreat them to be reconciled to Him, and to receive the blessings of salvation at his hands. So desirous is He that they may escape the wrath to come, and be happy for ever, that, after repeated refusals, He again, and again, solicits them to fly for refuge to the only hope that is set before them.— But none will hear the calls of mercy, and the invitations of grace, when this life is at an end. Death will put a final period to all possibility of acceptance and salvation. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave. There will be no change of character in the invisible state. The reigning dispositions we carry with us, when we leave the present world, will be our companions for ever, and the source of happiness or of misery. This is the irreversible decree pronounced on the departure of every soul.—He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. He who is now entreating sinners, with all the affection of friendship, and with all the tenderness of compassion, to be wise and happy, will, after death, appear against them, in all the terror of indignation; and then their loudest cries for mercy will be in vain—Because He called, and they refused;

refused ; He stretched out his hand, and no man regarded ; but they sat at nought all his counsel, and would none of his reproof : He also will laugh at their calamity ; and will mock when their fear cometh ; when their fear cometh as desolation, and their destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon them ; then shall they call upon Him, but He will not answer ; they shall seek Him early, but they shall not find Him : for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.

As life in general, so *youth* in particular, may be said to be the accepted time, and the day of salvation. It is the most *acceptable* that can be devoted to the service of our souls ; and the *fittest* season for obtaining salvation.

Though mercy will be extended to all, who, in any part or period of life, forsake their sins and return unto God through the Redeemer ; yet those, who, in the prime of life, present themselves unto Him a living sacrifice, are beheld by Him with distinguished favour. John, who was the youngest of the twelve, is stiled, by way of eminence, the disciple whom Jesus loved. There is something peculiarly attractive in those, who are under the governing influence of that faith which is the sub-

stance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, at a season when the imagination is most easily captivated with the flattering objects of sense; when the passions are generally headstrong, and vanity and folly predominant. And, by remembering their Creator in the days of their youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when they shall say, we have no pleasure in them, they do far more honour to religion, than others who enter into its service in their declining years, after they have been jaded in the ways of sin, or disgusted with the deceit and treachery of the world. They give it the preference when its most powerful rivals solicit their affections, and thereby manifest, that they devote themselves to it, not of constraint, but willingly.

And as the season of youth is the most *acceptable* when employed in God's service, so it is the *fittest* season for obtaining salvation. There are not then such stubborn habits to be subdued, as those have to encounter, who have been long inattentive to duty, and long accustomed to do evil.—The mind is then in its most ductile state, and most susceptible of religious impressions.—And the earlier the heart is consecrated to God, the greater the advantage for acquiring eminent attainments in virtue, and for securing a superior degree of glory.

But

But when it is said, *now* is the accepted time ; *now* is the day of salvation, we are principally to understand the *present* day and hour. This is the time that *may* be improved to our eternal salvation ; but this may be the *only* time : for our existence here is infinitely precarious.

Our blessed Saviour urges constant watchfulness and preparation from the uncertain time of his coming ; which is of equal force when applied to the uncertainty of the day of death, as when applied to the uncertainty of the day of judgment. Watch, therefore : for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Be ye also ready ; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

The sacred writers are continually endeavouring to impress the minds of men with the uncertainty of life, as a motive to improve the present season. They represent it by the most striking and expressive images ; by a fading flower ; by a fleeting shadow ; and by our liability to be crushed before the moth. And the numerous examples around us of persons being called hence, in the prime and vigor of their days, as well as under the decays and decrepitude of age, and often without any previous warning, confirm these declarations of holy writ. Many, who looked forward to distant years,
have

have been unexpectedly made free among the dead. Many, in their full strength, whose robust constitutions seemed to brave the assaults of death, have been brought down to the dust, by the superior power of the King of terrors; while others have been spared, who, in human apprehension, gave much fainter promises of a continuance: just as the slender shrub hath stood unhurt amidst the furious blast, which hath rooted up the sturdy oak. These instances should teach us to know our end, and the measure of our days what it is, that we may know how frail we are; and be excited immediately to improve the day of our visitation. What dependance can we rationally place on any future season, when we know not what a day may bring forth! What folly to suspend our everlasting *all* upon the attenuated thread of life, which, as one has well expressed it, not only bursts before the storm; but breaks even at a breeze!

It is awful to consider, what multitudes of our fellow immortals, who once enjoyed the means of grace, have, without improving them to their salvation, been summoned into the invisible state. They were lulled in the acquisitions of the world, or fluttering in the follies of a dissipated life, and thought of nothing less than striving to obtain the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

—It would have been better for them if they had never heard of the way of salvation thro' the Redeemer. It would have been better for them if they had never been born. Infinitely better never to exist, than to exist under the curse of God. If they had worlds of wealth to barter, they would give them all away for one overture of mercy from their offended Sovereign. But despair is one of the dreadful ingredients in the miseries of hell.

If the over-ruling hand of Providence had sent us down to the regions of the grave, before we had seen the light of this day, what do we think would have been the situation of our souls?—Would they have been with an innumerable company of angels, and with the spirits of just men made perfect, with God the Judge of all, and with Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant? or would they have been in outer darkness, the companions of devils, and the partners of their misery?

There is reason to apprehend there may be some in this assembly, on whom the means of grace have been hitherto bestowed in vain; who have been as barren trees in the garden of God; whose Lord and proprietor, speaking after the manner of men, hath come, year after year, seeking fruit, and finding none.—His forbearance and compassion have so far

far prevailed, that you are yet spared. If from this day ye bear fruit, well; if not, in his righteous anger, ye may be soon cut down as cumberers of the ground, and made the fuel of his fury.

It is probable that some of us will have passed the limits of life, before the close of the year we have now begun. Perhaps, a small part of it will reach to the destined boundary of our time. If death finds us in a state of acceptance, it will introduce us into the abodes of bliss: we shall exchange worlds to our unutterable gain. But death will prove a dreadful day, if we have no interest in the merits of the Saviour, and in the mercies of God. — Presume, sinner, no longer on the divine clemency; such presumption hath proved the eternal destruction of thousands.

Few, or none, who attend on the instructions of God's word, but have formed purposes of applying themselves to the securing their everlasting happiness. The misfortune is, they generally fix on some future period; and for the present are satisfied with forming the intention. But if you purpose ever to seek God's merciful acceptance; why not immediately seek it? — Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

“ Be

“ Be wise to-day; ’tis madness to defer,
“ And to the mercies of a moment leave
“ The vast concerns of an eternal scene.”

Salvation will be granted to those only who are of a righteous temper and life. Christ is not the minister of sin. He came that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness. He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again. The gospel plan is to lead men to happiness, in the way of holiness. It is founded on purity, as well as on mercy. The gospel requires repentance from dead works, and a vital operative faith. This is its language, — Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Except ye repent, ye shall perish. — Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. — Without faith it is impossible to please God. This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. — These are express declarations of Holy Writ. And faith and repentance, when genuine and scriptural, are always connected with a supreme love to God, with ardent desires of his favour, with a sovereign regard to invisible and eternal objects, and with a sincere and habitual conformity to the divine will. No name, profession, situation, or cir-

cumstances will be of any account with God, where the heart is alienated from his service. Real, personal religion is necessary to the being accepted of Him, and receiving the great salvation. 'Tis as necessary to these purposes, as the ear to hear, the tongue to speak, or the eye to behold the sun. Its necessity arises as well from the unchangeable nature of things, as from the established constitution of the gospel covenant. And religion's being indispensably necessary to our acceptance and salvation (which are of the last consequence to the apostate sons and daughters of men) furnishes a forceable argument for an immediate devotedness unto it. We should make haste and delay not to keep God's commandments,

I would observe, as a further argument, that the difficulty of engaging in the service of religion will increase in proportion to the delay. The longer men persevere in sin, the more they will be enslaved to it; the longer they neglect religion, the more they will be averse to its practice: for all habits, both good and evil, strengthen by indulgence, and are deeper rooted the longer they continue. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, who are accustomed to do evil. By which the prophet represents the vast difficulty of entering upon, and pursuing a contrary course to that to which we have been long

accustomed. And, indeed, we can have little hope of those who have spent their days in a wilful forgetfulness of God, when they come to the decline of life. If such are brought to repentance, they are plucked as brands out of the burning. For one who, at that season, is brought to it, thousands remain impenitent, and are undone for ever.

To prevail on us to postpone our attention to religion, the artful enemy of our interest is wont to represent it as incompatible with the enjoyments of the present life. This is a temptation usually applied to the younger part of mankind, and too often with fatal success. — Now, on supposition that it were so, how ought every man to act, and how would every wise man act? Would he not rather deny himself present enjoyments, and prepare for immortal happiness, than, for their sake, endanger his everlasting salvation? It would be our wisdom to act thus *were* religion inconsistent with the pleasurable enjoyments of the present life: for what proportion do these bear to the glories of the future world, either as to their nature, degree, or duration? — But it is *not* so. Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden is light. The ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. All true, rational, innocent enjoyments religion allows, and is itself the source of the noblest pleasures that we are capable of receiving. What religion forbids,

bids, are those mean, unmanly, guilty gratifications, which degrade and debase our nature, and which are followed by uneasiness, disgust and vexation.

Consider, Sirs, the infinite value of your souls, and the importance of immediately attending to their final happiness. Resolve in the strength of God to devote yourselves to his service without delay. Cease to do evil, learn to do well. A departure from evil is the first step in the road to glory. If you are conscious of the allowed commission of any one sin, renounce all connection with it. 'Tho' it may be to you as the right hand, cut it off; or as the right eye, pluck it out. *One sin* habitually indulged will as effectually exclude you from acceptance and salvation, as a thousand.—And not only cease from sin, but be active in duty. Daily bow at the footstool of mercy. Open your inmost thoughts without reserve before the Throne of God. Tell him the deep sense you have of your inevitable ruin without his gracious interposition. Beg of him to look upon you in the face of Jesus, and lead you into the way of righteousness and life. Be frequent and fervent in your addresses to Heaven. These are the grand means of salvation. Pray always, as the apostle hath expressed it, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watch thereunto with all perseverance; and your prayers and supplications will not be in vain. Here is the encour-

agement, seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. —

Having obtained help of God we continue to this day furrounded with his mercies; which we should be ready at all times gratefully to acknowledge, but especially when brought, as we now are, to the beginning of a new year. He hath sheltered us under the shadow of his wings, and secured us from the ravages of death. Some of us the past year may have been under the assaults of a threatening disease, and, in human views, just departing into that world from whence there is no return. The great Sovereign of nature interposed for our deliverance. The great Physician administered to our relief. He healed our diseases and redeemed our lives from destruction.—Whatever we may ascribe of our recovery to medical aid; or whatever we may owe to the tender assiduities of our dearest connections; yet our preservation is ultimately to be attributed to God. The likeliest means are nothing without him. They are as breasts without milk to an hungry infant; or clouds without rain to a thirsty land. When God with-holds his blessing, vain is the help of man.

“ Our life contains a thousand springs,
And dies if one be gone :
Strange ! that a harp of thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long.

But

But 'tis our GOD supports our frame,
The GOD that built us first;
Salvation to th' Almighty Name,
That raised us from the dust."

But of those whose lives are preserved, many are confined to chambers of sickness and to beds of pain. We, thro' the divine favour, are not among those prisoners of disease and sorrow. We, perhaps, have a full tide of health, or at least such a share of it as not to be abridged of the pleasure and advantage of social intercourse. And health stands in the foremost rank of temporal blessings. All others lose their relish where this is wanting: And where this resides it adds to the agreeableness of every other enjoyment, as the lustre of an unclouded day increases the beauty and loveliness of the creation.

We still receive also of the gifts of God's bounty. We have food to eat and raiment to put on. Most of us have the conveniencies of life. And those to whom these are now granted have peculiar reason to acknowledge the kindness of an indulgent providence.—I know not when this fruitful Country was a witness to such scenes of domestic distress as at this day. Many are now compelled to deny themselves those comforts and accommodations which in better times were within their reach; and

to take up with what was the support of those of an inferior station. And many who heretofore had bread enough and to spare, are now ready to perish with hunger. It would deeply affect every one that is not insensible of the feelings of humanity, to hear of, not to say to behold, the triumphs of want, in numerous families, in various parts of this kingdom. What a sad vicissitude since plenty presided, though in a homely dress, at the peasant's board, and inspired health and cheerfulness into his ruddy offspring!—Who, or what, may be the leading causes of this unhappy change, which is big with national ruin, is not for me peremptorily to pronounce: But if it be the effect, wholly, or in part, of an accursed thirst of unrighteous gain, I would remind the authors of it, were my voice capable of being heard throughout the Land, that there is a day approaching, when the Almighty will avenge the poor, and him that hath no helper.—Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it, saith the Lord.

That we have so many mercies, of which numbers are in want, we must not ascribe to ourselves. 'Tis not owing to any peculiar desert in us, but to the unsearchable counsels of God's benignity and wisdom. Many who are eminent for their religious attainments; for the vigor of their faith; the fervor of their love; and the regularity and exemplariness

plariness of their conversation and conduct, have not that share of outward good which providence hath vouchsafed to us.—These unmerited mercies call upon us for the effusions of gratitude to their generous Giver.

But we continue in the enjoyment of superior mercies. We have the means of securing our final happiness; and of advancing in our spiritual improvement. We have the advantage of social, as well as of private devotion, which the wisest and best have always esteemed as among the choicest blessings: and we are this first day of a new year in the sanctuary of God.—We adore thee, Thou Preserver of Men, that we are the living, the living, to PRAISE Thee! The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth, and for evermore. Praise the Lord.

I hope I am addressing myself to those who have not the form of religion only; but who have felt its power; who are accepted of God, and entitled to the great salvation. The gifts of his grace which you have received are a sure pledge of future glory. You have a treasure in heaven; which is infinitely more valuable than all the treasures of earth. There neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and there thieves do not break through nor steal.

These

These shall perish; but that shall endure. Death itself shall not deprive you of it: Death shall put you into its everlasting possession.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me, is the language of every grateful heart. And tho' we cannot be profitable to Him, we may be profitable to those around us: And he regards as done to himself, what, from a right principle, is done to them. Benevolence to our fellow creatures is a reigning feature in a religious character. If a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.

You have an opportunity this day, of gratifying, in a very important instance, your benevolent affections.—The service to which you are now called, might, were it needful, be recommended and enforced by a variety of arguments; but I trust little need be said to prevail on you to assist a charity, which bids fair to produce, and which actually has produced very valuable effects.

I have before me an account of the rise, progress, and present state, of the Charity-school, in Gravel-lane, Southwark, as an advocate for which I now appear.

“ The foundation of this school was laid in the year 1687, in the reign of James II, when a school was set up by one Poulton, a Jesuit, and public notice was given, that he would instruct the children of the poor, gratis : Upon which Mr. Arthur Shallet, Mr. Samuel Warburton, and Mr. Ferdinando Holland, laid the foundation of this School, to avoid the dangerous consequences of a Popish school, and to provide for the instruction of the children of the poor in the Protestant way.

The number of the scholars at first was forty ; afterwards it encreased to fifty, and is now two hundred. They are instructed in the principles Christianity ; and are taught to read, write, and cypher, and thereby qualified for the service of God and man. It may be said to be the first school the Protestant Dissenters were concerned in. But objects are received without distinction of parties, the common good being intended. It is situated in one of the poorest parts of this city, and the children of the poorest sort of watermen, fishermen, and others, are here taught, without any expence to their parents, and are furnished with spelling-books, testaments, catechisms, and writing and cyphering-books. The girls are taught to sew and knit.

The charges have been defrayed by the gifts and subscriptions of private persons, with two annual collections, and the kind remembrance of the said School by some in their last wills.”

The plan of this charity I approve : It is truly christian and catholic : And I rejoice that the objects of it are so numerous. All must wish well to such a design, who are well-wishers to our Country, and to our Religion ; or who desire the temporal and eternal happiness of individuals.

The wisest of men in all ages, have looked on the instruction of youth, in every view, as of the greatest moment. 'Tis the language of inspiration, —Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it ; that is, such as have good principles early instilled into their minds, are the most *likely* to feel their influence in advancing life, and to pursue a wise and a happy course. But many of the lower class of mankind have not the *ability* ; and if they had, have not the *time* to give necessary instruction to their children ; and are incapable of bearing the expence of their being instructed by others. Can a benevolent and generous disposition, therefore, be exerted on fitter objects than the children of such necessitous parents ? —These are the objects of the charity I now recommend. And will you not, as your power will admit, cheerfully contribute to its support ?

Allow me to suggest, and I shall only suggest, —that the objects of this charity, without your friendly aid, would, from their situation, be peculiarly

cularly exposed to the depredations of vice, and in imminent danger of infamy in this world, and misery in the next;—that you may be instrumental, by your liberal contributions, in rescuing them from the destructive evils, which are the spontaneous growth of ignorance, poverty and idleness;—in rendering them, instead of the disturbers of our streets, and the terror of our dwellings, useful members of the community; nay, (as by this charity they are instructed in the principles of our holy religion) you may be instrumental in saving them from sin and hell, and leading them to virtue and to happiness; and not them *only*, but considering them as, by and by, the heads of families, the effects of your liberality may extend to the eternal salvation of generations yet unborn. And does not this idea warm every breast in this assembly? Are you not ambitious of promoting the everlasting welfare of your fellow creatures; and of carrying on the design, for which the Son of God came down from heaven, and lived, and laboured, and suffered, and died?

24 OCT 62

May the managers and promoters of this benevolent undertaking have the sublime pleasure of seeing, in numbers, its salutary effects; and may God reward them an hundred fold! Amen.

F I N I S.

